1994.11.05 From L. Fletcher Prouty to me

4201 Peachtree Place, Alexandria, VA 22304 Nov 5, 1994

Dear Mike, (It's late. My grammatical corrections may be terrible. Do your best with it.)

What a magnificent letter!!! I'm talking about the open letter you wrote to "Dear John" dated Oct 20, 1994. If nothing at all else came out of the COPA meetings, that letter made it worthwhile. As I see it, there were a lot of "Dear Johns" i.e. "moles" at that gathering, and they were all busily furthering the causes and desires of their sponsors.

First of all , it was very nice to see you again and to have some time together. I appreciate the fact that you took time from your own planned schedule for that, and thank you. I had not planned to go to the meetings. I have little interest in the subject; but there were quite a few people, like yourself, who said they were going to be there and we could meet. It's a joke to have 15 minutes to speak; but at least it gave me an excuse to be there for the morning.

You mention the "public discussion that began at the conference." It concerns me that so many fine scholars and great people focus on that subject. The crime is one thing; and the Cover Story is another. However the Cover Story is like a balloon. Once it has been burst, at any point, it is all over. Researching Oswald, Ruby, de Mohrenschildt, etc and etc are worth almost nothing ...with respect to the murder ...except to get a peek at some unusual people. It is not worth it. We all know that they did not murder the President; and for the most part their roles have been created. We should boycott that whole area of smoke.

I really can not see what anyone hopes to discover in Government papers that are more than 30 years old. For historians, that is a necessity because the Government will not release them sooner. But, to solve a crime, it has no purpose.

However, if it became a part of my business to set the goal s for an organization as potentially able as COPA, I would go back to day One and lay out every single thing Kennedy and his supporters, etc. did that caused the opposition to kill him before he could be re-elected. Then we would begin to refine the idea of "Why" those power centers made the consensual decision to murder him. They believed they had to do it ...for their own survival .

I recal l well that when I worked for Mr Gates, the Secretary of Defense, that he had on his immediate staff an excellent pilot who had been a test pilot for one of the large corporations. (I have his name and knew him well ; but I am not going to take the time to look it up right now.) After the Kennedy election, he and I used to go to lunch together all the time. We were the only pilots in the Secretary's office. He would pass on all the irate, fanatical conversation that was going on because of Kennedy and the McNamara team. It was pure vitriol from the start.

All of that crowd, the old Eisenhower team were absolutely sure that they could swing the election for NIXON and that all of the things they had gotten underway during that eight years would come to fruition during the Nixon administration. This was big money stuff. They had worked on Vietnam since Sept 1945. They had kept the WW II force structure in shape since then. They had gone big time with nuclear weapons of all kinds. They were committed to projects worth trillions into the next 8 years. The TFX procurement project, worth $6.8 billion, was a single case in point. And then came Nov 8, 1960.

So between Nov 8, 1960 and April 17, 1961 they hurriedly escalated the anti-Castro operation from aircraft drops and over-the-beach operations, by 30 and 40 men each; to a 4000 man Brigade to "invade" Cuba. That's fantastic! Ike never let them ever think of invasion.

They built all that during the "lame duck" period. JFK knew what was happening so he began to play his hand. Their goal was to make him look ridiculous ...and they did. His immediate response, April 22, 1961 was to set up the Cuban Study Group and begin the long task of getting the CIA totally out of the covert operations business that the Dulles brothers had "sanctified" with NSC 5412 on March 1954 ...when they were expanding things in Vietnam with the Saigon Military Mission project under Lansdale ...their ace.

JFK began with Max Taylor's great NSAM 55, 56 and 57 series. Then as things progressed , JFK spent the l ast 90 days of his life working on the plans to get all U.S. personnel out of Vietnam by the end of 1965 ...i.e. after his re-election.

That was a massive confrontation behind the scenes and an enormous amount of money was involved. Bucky Fuller estimated the Cold War cost at $6 trillion. This is the sort of thing that these guys killl for.

As it all started, I sat up there in the OSO, "the immediate of office of the Sec of Defense" and heard the rumblings. That's all anyone needs to know. I can recall a time when the President of Bell Helicopter, whom I knew well, walked past my table at the Army Navy Club, and stopped to take out a check for $360 million to show me with a smile, "We're on the way." Of course that was before Nov 8, 1960.

So today we have the "Newmans." Of course we have always had them. You ask about "your intelligence background." That's a damn good question. The first time I ever heard of him, he called me and asked me if I would join him at lunch. I was going to be in the city; so I agreed and suggested the Nat'l Press Club.

We met. He seemed very young, almost shy, and not in any way a "shining star." Before lunch ...and he never mentioned that he was on duty as a Major with Army Intelligence ...we talked a while as he told me all the work he had been doing on his Doctorate studies concentrating on the Vietnam War. Actually he seemed to know very little about it all.

Finally, and out of the blue, he said that he had read that I knew something about a policy paper known as "NSAM #263." He seemed never to have seen it, and not to know much about it.

I responded with something like, "You have been majoring in the Vietnam War studies and you aren't aware of the most important policy paper of them all?" He said, "No, he had never seen it."

I knew then that I was wasting my time; so I suggested lunch and we talked a bit. It was then that he casually mentioned that he had contacted Stone. He did not mention working on his book. I had not heard of him although I knew most of the people working with Stone on the script.

After lunch I was saying, "Good-bye" when he pleaded and begged me to stay longer. He said you are the first person I have met who knows "263". You have just got to tell me about it and let me ask questions."

Quite frankly ,I was fed up with his sophomoric comments, and felt that further talk would go nowhere. I said "John, you go back to your school and its library and get out the files on Sept and Oct 1963 and read about the Taylor/McNamara Trip and their trip report. Read the "Pentagon Papers. It's in there. Then call me again and I'll come back and we'll talk about it." He appeared ready to burst out in tears ...as I left.

On the way home, I got concerned about him and decided to call Stone's office and run the trail backwards. Why would that guy have a thing to do with the film JFK? I learned little from that but that he had some contact. They knew his name.

Sometime later when I read the ESQUIRE article by Robert Sam Anson (another one of the hired hands of the Cover Story). Newman had fed Anson the story. I finally learned that Newman was an active duty Army Intelligence Officer. That did it. That could be the only answer for that strange first meeting.

So I looked the guy up and soon discovered that he was not only on active duty; but that he lives in Odenton, MD which is on the fence of Ft. Meade the home of the NSA. He is not CIA. He may not be Army, except for cover. He must be NSA. They are the ones who make it possible for him to get into the Stone team, to get Warners to publish his book and to set up all the jobs in the spotlight that he gets. They open the doors. That is their methodology.

When I was with OSO [Office of Special Operations], as I clearly state in "The Secret Team," OSO was in charge of NSA. I know that outfit. And it is not CIA. So he can say what he wants about CIA. That's his "line". So much for that.

JFK was winning that round ...NSAM 55,56,57 craftily set the course as identified by Walter B. Smith himself former DCI. And with NSAM 263 that was actually written by Krulak, with a lot of my help, based entirely on policy statements from JFK himself. See FRUS [Foreign Relations of the United States], 1961-1963, Vol IV , VIETNAM-August-December 1963] ...one of the most important resource books you can get. There was no way he wasn't going to be re-elected ...save one. That happened at Dealey Plaza; and the world has not been the same since.

Let me refer to your letter and take some points from it:

1) I wonder if John will tell you a reasonable story about his "Intelligence" background. In NSA they are all trained to have stories ready. He most likely has a good one. It will be based on his "long, long years of study, etc." He'll never mention NSA, and may give a weak clue about some CIA fix.

2) Your last 11 lines of that second paragraph on page 1 are great. Let's see what you get there. "Steering the assault" as you put it is great ...and plausible. OF COURSE

3) On the "Oswald 201 file" caper, keep in mind that all men in the armed forces have "201 files." Oswald was a Marine and had one. However, and I set this up with Larry Houston and the CIA "Military Personnel" people. We had the CIA create a "201 file" that was like the military one so that he would have a reasonable account of his time, while on that agency job. He's still and always a Marine. He does not join the agency. We called it "Sheep-dipping." John may not know how that works.

4) From Phase 1 through Phase 5 I see nothing but elaborate "Cover Story" obfuscation. Skilful work, but all "Golden Apples."

5) You like "Phase 5." OK, it is a fine Cover Story for the major elements of the Power Elite that need to be covered by some "logical " tangible organization. But it is no more than that.

6) Quoting our most able friend WBS is great. It will do John good. In fact your entire letter will.

7) "Renegades" that part of the lower paragraph is fine. Of course the entire letter is; but I'm picking points.

8) Your stuff on "Time Warner" is good. This is the type of outfit that has regular lines to NSA, and they can be "assigned" a "spook" such as John to do things for them. So

his NSA job gets him ready access to Time Warner and through that to Stone. Then he works as a high powered "Mole" in the film story.

I spoke carefully, and wrote much, with Stone about the "mole" business. The difference here, and I believe John never uncovered it was that the script that Stone was using was made up from my FREEDOM articles, all 19, that were published in the 1985-1987 time period. Stone had already read all of them, the editor told me later, long before the film had even started. Also I have a letter from Stone's staff saying that when Garrison first came to Stone he had with him his own book and "a file of letters from Prouty written before his (Garrison's) book had been published when I was working on it with him." That Stone source told me that the screenwriter used almost all of my Garrison letter material.

So Stone had all of that stuff before Newman, and did not need Newman' s "non-existent" book that had not been published. Stone knew Newman did not know much about the subject. And of course my book was not published until after the script was written. That too, fooled Newman.

So it was not simply Time Warner--NSA help there. We had already got the script just about in concrete before Newman showed up. Of course he was responsible for some bad lines in the movie. They couldn't help it. NSA is too strong.

9) "They also published your book." That was after the fact and really did not have much to do with the movie, but it gave the Time Warner people something to make it look as though it did. They and John have played heavily on that connection, which was weak at best.

10) Next ...on the JFK "secretly planned to withdraw" i.e. NSAM #263. This is still fishy.
After all, that world wide STARS & STRIPES headline about "US OUT OF VIET BY '65" ought to convince everyone that it was not a JFK "secret" and that it was a highly evolved policy as the above cited FRUS proves. I know, Krulak was in the White House almost daily. We wrote the Taylor/McNamara Trip Report that became NSAM 263, and it was highly developed policy. Only Dealey Plaza nullified it.

11) The connection between the assassination and the Vietnam War can be reduced to one word "MONEY." It had been planned over decades, since WW II , to chew up hundreds of billions. With JFK dead it did.

12) I am amazed at the treatment of the "reversal of policy" games re Vietnam.
Of course there was. But researchers must read the documentation of the Honolulu Conference, that is in the FRUS IV; and something as simple as the New York TIMES piece on that subject of that date, circa Nov 20. The TIMES article is the best public source. It was right there, as was the STARS & STRIPES for all to read. I don't see all the garbage that has been published about that policy and about the Honolulu Conference. What these guys do is read each other's books. They are all contrived.

You have the correct line, "The documentary record is perfectly clear that JFK was planning to withdraw ...etc." Keep in mind that the trip report that gave birth to NSAM 263 was not written by Tay l or and McNamara. We had it flown by a jet fighter to them in Hawaii. It was practically dictated by JFK, written by me, among others, and polished in his fine style by Victor Krulak. It was JFK's idea and our assigned task. Simple, and straight.

13) You have a line in the third para. on p. 4 that has to be reviewed. "Despite the almost total lack of documentation regarding what happened at the Honolulu conference on Nov 20 ...." There is plenty of documentation. Just for kicks, I

have a copy of a 1991 letter signed by McGeorge Bundy on his official office letterhead saying that he believes he did not attend that conference. In an odd way, that could be true, despite the plentiful record to the contrary. He might have used the conference to cover the fact that he was working on NSAM #273.

Have you ever read his statement about going to the Honolulu conference in a jet and saying how wonderful it was to travel via jet on such a trip. Now certainly Bundy knew all about the advantages of jet flying by 1963. Could he have had that silly line inserted into the record to make people think he had gone to Honolulu when he had not gone? When you recall other things Bundy did, like the Bay of Pigs phone call, that's not too far out of line. He's odd, in a weird manner.

Another thing, this over-playing NSAM 273 is a pl oy al so, The real policy statement that changed the course of the Vietnam War is NSAM #288, March 1962. That did it!

14) You make a terrific point quoting Newman from his p. 435 with reference to the "deterioration of the war effort." The actual record shows that the Honolulu conferees generally stated that the change since the Diems' deaths had begun to create a favorable course of action and that things were going quite well.

John is all wrong there; but of course those are his orders. Ask him to explain the difference between 263-273 and 288. Then you can see that it was done over months after JFK was dead. The Honolulu conference did not give that "deterioration" signal.

15) I believe you can support your concern about the validity of the Bundy "draft" of 273. It is positively weird to have him sitting there on Nov 21 writing a paper for JFK that is far different than JFK's stated and publicized policy … on the day before JFK was killed. It all but convicts Bundy of complicity. How would he have known things were going to be changed?

That's as bad as Les Gelb's "Pentagon Papers" Vol II page 223 reporting as "Official History" .

> "22 Nov 1963 Lodge confers with the President. Having flown to Washington the day after the conference, Lodge meets with the President and presumably continues the kind of report given in Honolulu." (Which President, the dead one, or the live one?)

There is Gelb doing a Bundy. They both screw up history … on purpose. Note Gelb's boys wrote, "the kind of report given in Honolulu." (See above.) There's your conference report. Ask Les and John about that.

That's your letter … or least enough for tonight. The tips of my fingers are all beat up. My dog is trying to sleep. I'm whipped from splitting fireplace logs this PM. A great day, and it's a pleasure to have your letter to add to all this.

I'd love to hear what response you get ...from John and from the others. From the others ought to be the best. But I'll make you a bet. There are going to be several that support John. They are more of the same ...manufactured moles. Have fun.

Ciao,
L. Fletcher Prouty